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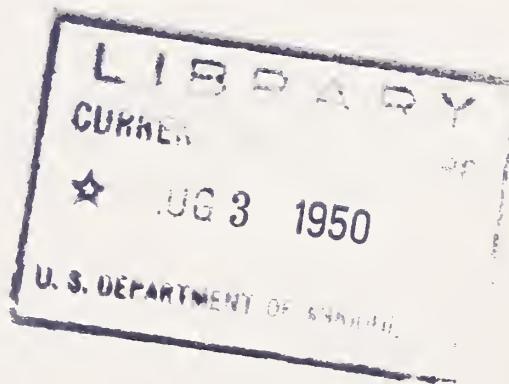
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May-June 1950

MARKETING ACTIVITIES



U. S. Department of Agriculture
Production and Marketing Administration
Washington 25, D.C.

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(Beginning with this issue, MARKETING ACTIVITIES will be processed by the Government Printing Office instead of by the Department of Agriculture. The change in printing schedules has made it necessary to combine the May-June issues.--Editor)

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Merchandising Overdrive

By J. Pervis Milnor

If any doctors felt a drop in business during the past fall and winter months, it might be chalked up to the fact that people in the United States consumed 40,000,000 bushels more of apples during that time than during the same period in 1948-49.

Proof for all this apple eating is found in storage and disappearance figures of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. Perhaps more impressive are the following reports on increased consumption turned in by trade and related sources:

Retail sales of the fruit during the past fall and winter jumped from 30 to 300 percent in various parts of the country when compared with the same season the previous year. Restaurants, hotels, cafeterias and similar services reported that they sold from 25 to 65 percent more apples. The dining car service of one railroad alone showed a 50 percent increase in servings of apple dishes. National chains of five-and-ten cent stores boosted sales of apple pie, apple dumplings, and candied apples by 50 percent. Cookie manufacturers used 10 to 25 percent more while one New England baking company reported that it used almost 400 bushels daily in making apple pies.

This boost in consumption fortunately came in the face of a bumper apple crop - 133,181,000 bushels in 1949 as compared with 88,407,000 bushels in 1948. For some varieties, the 1949 crop was 100 percent greater than in the previous year. Thanks to increased consumption, however, cold stor-

The Plentiful Foods Program is a Production and Marketing Administration "action program" -- designed to spur the movement of abundant foods through normal channels of trade.

age holdings of apples May 1, 1950, were only about 400,000 bushels above those for the same month in 1949--indicating a disappearance of nearly 40,000,000 bushels more over the period beginning in September 1949 than for the same months a year earlier. Moreover, another million bushels went into export during the same period in 1949-50.



During a two-week period a cursory check of metropolitan newspapers showed that 48 large "dailies" in 22 States and the District of Columbia had devoted over 1,000 column inches to the Plentiful Foods Program. Since copy for national magazines is prepared months ahead of publication, PMA also prepares an advance plentiful foods list based on marketing history, growers' intentions and crop reports.

The reason why people ate more apples was not just luck, however. It was the result of probably one of the greatest merchandising programs for a single fruit that has ever been carried out. It was a campaign pushed by everyone interested in apples from the man with an orchard to the man with the appetite. It was actively supported by retailers and other handlers, Federal and State officials, civic groups, consumer interests, advertising agencies, newspapers, magazines, radio and television. Nation-wide support for this campaign was encouraged by the Department of Agriculture as a part of its continuous program to encourage for all other abundant foods just such merchandising assistance as that needed for the bumper apple crop.

A PMA Action Program

This is the so-called "Plentiful Foods Program" of the Department administered by the Food Distribution Programs Branch of the Production and Marketing Administration.

Briefly, the program seeks to stimulate consumption of "plentiful foods" moving through normal trade channels. These foods include many

in seasonal abundance as was last year's apple crop, but the program also is designed to aid in increasing marketings of all other plentiful foods, both fresh and processed.

The program is based on the sensible premise that maximum utilization of "plentiful foods" is of direct benefit to consumers, producers, the food industry and the national economy.

Consumers benefit because the program assures them of more for their food dollar. Producers benefit because it provides better markets, at a fair price for their crops. The food trades benefit because it creates sales opportunities by stimulating consumer demand. The Nation benefits because the program promotes efficient use of abundant production.

Apples Given the One-Two-Three-Four

The "Plentiful Foods Program" consists of four major phases of emphasis which the Food Distribution Programs Branch refers to as "one, two, three and four star" operations. Last fall's all-out apple campaign was a "four star" operation.

The first and basic phase of the program is the preparation of a monthly list, consisting of as many as 20 foods expected to be in plentiful supply during the next month. The list is compiled the first of each month on the basis of recommendations made by the various commodity branches of the Production and Marketing Administration, as well as from the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Extension Service, Bureau of Home Nutrition and Home Economics, and producer and food industry organizations.

To be placed on the list, the foods must meet the following requirements: (1) must be generally consumed by a large proportion of the population and not be a luxury item; (2) must be generally available throughout the country in larger quantities than the market will readily absorb in the period covered by the list; and (3) appreciable quantities of the food would be wasted or the market unduly depressed unless consumption is stimulated.

The placing of a food on the list is known as a "one star" operation.

One to four foods are selected monthly, on the basis of peak of marketing or extreme abundance of supply, and are designated on the list as "Feature Items," or foods that need particularly intensive promotion.



Last fall's "four-star" apple campaign was actively supported by retailers.

When a food makes this "feature item" listing, it is the subject of a "two star" program.

Now, before the list of plentiful foods is given general distribution, it is localized to reflect supply conditions in the five geographic areas covered by the PMA offices in New York, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, and San Francisco and PMA's Office for Marketing in the Metropolitan area of New York. In the field offices, commodities are deleted or added to the list on the basis of area supply conditions as reported by area commodity branch representative, State agricultural officials, grower organizations and food distributor groups.

After the necessary adjustments have been made, the "Plentiful Foods List," with its "Feature Items," is made available to food trade groups and associations, wholesalers, retailers, including chain stores and supermarkets, restaurants, hotels, institutions such as hospitals and other feeding services, home economists, growers and their organizations and related interests.

Consumer Aid Is a "Follow-through"

Distribution of the list to the consuming public through newspapers, radio stations, and other information media is made a bit later, timed, more or less, to coincide with the appearance of the "plentiful foods" on the markets. Through these channels, as well as in interested food and advertising trades, the list is supplemented with recipes and menu suggestions. Thus as a final, pay-off twist consumers are directly helped with meal planning and food purchasing by being informed of current "better buys".

This list receives a tremendous coverage. It goes to 75 percent of all newspapers in the United States, including those printed in foreign languages, and to as many as three-fourths of the more than 2,500 commercial radio stations in the country. It is estimated that over half of the 500,000 retail food outlets in the United States are influenced by its distribution through their trade organizations and wholesaler groups.

Even with this coverage, a particular food may be in such an abundant supply that it is felt that additional stimulation is necessary to bring about a market-stabilizing increase in consumption. Enter "Operation Three Star," or what is known as a "Special Program."



Plentiful Foods
MONTHLY LIST

每月廉價食物

本報經與有關方面合作，
於每月底在本欄表列下月份
岸區豐富而廉美之食物。使讀
家及家庭主婦得及時購買。並
為便利計中英文物名並列。以
服務讀者。

編者識

(九月份)

(一)最豐富者 梨 Pears 洋蔥 Onions
母雞 Hens

(二)水菜 蘋果 Apples 梨 Pears
鮮梅 Fresh Prunes

鮮葡萄 Fresh Grapes

鮮桃 Fresh Peaches

(三)菜蔬 耶菜 Cabbage 洋蔥 Onions
番茄 Tomatoes 甜薯 Sweet

"designated as plentiful."

This operation is particularly effective in moving a locally over-abundant food in a particular marketing area or on a Nation-wide basis. In addition to the use of "one" and "two star" operations, PMA representatives, by letter, telephone, and telegraph, enlist the support of selected groups representing wholesalers and retailers and their organizations, advertising groups, newspapers, radio, State officials, chambers of commerce and others in a vigorous campaign for this particular food. In addition, these efforts are paralleled by activities of producer organizations. As a backdrop for this, the Department furnishes covering information, fact sheets, menus and recipes, and enlists the efforts of all groups in an intensive Thursday-to-Wednesday "Merchandising Week" campaign. This period is selected because it includes heavy week-end shopping, though the time period can be extended.

A good example of an area "three star" program was the one conducted for Virginia and Maryland Eastern Shore sweetpotatoes last fall. In 1948, the market situation for "sweets" from that area was so critical PMA had to purchase 236 carlots in order to support prices. Last year's crop, however, was covered by a "three star" Plentiful Foods Program directed at Southeastern markets. Despite a national crop higher than that of 1948, it was necessary for PMA to purchase only 6 cars of sweetpotatoes from the Eastern Shore area.

Personal Contact Caps "Four-Star" Program

The "four Star" or "all-out" program is called into action when it is felt that all of the activities previously mentioned will not be enough to meet a particularly bad market situation for a certain commodity. Here the previous programs are intensified and expanded by an extra degree of information support in that the letter, telephone, and telegraph requests for cooperation are followed up by personal meetings with key representatives of all groups using the "Plentiful Foods List". In addition, when it is felt that it will be particularly effective, representatives of the Food Distribution Programs Branch may help initiate a special community program in a major wholesale area.

The 1940 census shows that there are 33 of these major wholesale areas throughout the United States--each with a population of 1,000,000 or more. In all, these areas include probably 75,000,000 people or about half the total population. When a national "four star" program is planned, representatives of the Branch go into many of these and other areas to contact representative groups to support the campaign.

An idea of the extent of this direct approach work by branch representatives is gained from the records which show that more than 1,500 such contacts were made in the 12 month period July 1948 to June 1949. Nearly half were made with individuals or groups representing the distributive trades and other contacts were made with allied interests in food merchandising.

As a part of this direct contact work, for example, a working group of 50 or more members from industry was called together in Chicago for a coordination of efforts. Among those represented were the food trades,

press, radio, advertising, department stores, citizens groups, and labor. Similar groups may be initiated, when such interest is manifest, in many of the other 32 major wholesaling areas. This will enable the food industries and allied groups to step in and take over "plentiful food" programs they feel will be of benefit.

A supplementary part of the "Plentiful Foods Program" is a "Foods to Feature" list. Since copy for most national magazines and releases from other sources is planned from three to six months in advance, it is obvious that the monthly "Plentiful Foods List" is of little value to such publications. Therefore, PMA compiles another monthly list, based on farm and marketing history, growers' intentions, crop reports and other available information, which anticipates foods likely to be in abundant supply three to six months in the future. This list is designed to inform national magazines, advertising agencies, producer groups, and the food trades what foods to expect in plentiful supply later on so that articles, advertising copy, merchandising programs, etc., may be planned for the marketing peak of the crops listed. Apples, for example, were on the list for October 1949 that was sent out by the Department in early July of that year.

Press Coverage Excellent

Support of the "Plentiful Foods Program" by producer, merchandising, advertising, public service and other groups has been consistently excellent. During a two-week period, for example, a cursory check of metropolitan newspapers revealed that 48 large "dailies" in 22 States and the District of Columbia had devoted over 1,000 column inches of space to the "Plentiful Foods Program."

In a recent intra-organization letter discussing the "Plentiful Food Program," one of the large food industry groups stressed that "the general consumer advertising backing is something the grocer could never afford to buy in 20 years of business."

The program also has the solid backing of the Advertising Council, the public service organization of the advertising industry. The Council furnishes special radio treatment weekly for one or more "plentiful foods" suggested by the Department as especially in need of promotion.

The "Foods to Feature" phase of the program has drawn enthusiastic response from food page editors of national magazines who describe it as a "great help" in planning advance editorial copy.

With all this support, it is no wonder that other recent "four star" programs, such as those for peaches, and broilers and fryers, have been eminently successful.

Help For a "Flash" Peach Harvest

The peach program, which was undertaken on an "all-out" basis in 26 northeast and mid-west States last fall, was made necessary by the fact that the peach harvest in those areas, which generally extends over a

period of weeks, came on all at once. The following results were reported for this "Special" Plentiful Foods Program:

Two large chain store organizations reported a 100 percent increase in sales, or more than 53,000 bushels, in one week in one area alone. Another chain boosted tonnage of peaches handled by 300 percent--60 cars in 1949 as compared with 20 cars in 1948. A Chicago restaurant chain sold 30 percent more peaches and another restaurant group sold all the peaches purchased for the first week of the drive in one day. A large Illinois manufacturing concern, serving 25,000 meals daily to its workers, used 100 percent more peaches in 1949 than during the comparable period of 1948. Beneficial, too, was the help which this program provided in making it unnecessary for the Department to purchase fresh peaches to maintain prices despite the unusual harvest conditions.

Faltering Poultry Market Steadied

The broiler and fryer campaign, carried out during January and February this year, and conducted primarily in the eastern area and west to Texas--the center of both commercial production and consumption--showed equally good results. According to information received by the Department, prior to the campaign, poultry prices were actually below cost of production, with losses as much as 5 cents per pound to producers reported. As a result of the program, the PMA Poultry Branch reported that prices climbed 1 to 3 cents per pound in the Delmarva area and 5 cents a pound in the southeast. Reports such as the following were received:

One large grocery chain reported a 300 percent increase in broiler and fryer sales in its New York district. Another grocery organization reported sales in the Nashville district jumped to 34,784 pounds during the "program week" from 22,000 pounds the previous week. Another national group reported New York sales up 396 percent. In Washington, D. C. one grocery organization found the first week of sales promotion so successful that they decided to continue it for another week, an almost unprecedented move for that organization. A large packing house reported it moved 50 percent more broilers during the "program week" than in any other week in any previous year.

Restaurants, hotels and dining car services in the program areas also reported substantial increases in servings of broilers and fryers. A metal foil manufacturing company put on an advertising program during the period featuring the cooking of chicken in its product. Excellent cooperation was received from newspapers, radio and television stations, which featured menus and recipes calling for boilers and fryers.

Although full reports of results are not yet available, the Food Distribution Programs Branch is confident that other "four star" programs that have been carried out since January this year on eggs, onions, and dry beans were helpful to both producers and consumers. In addition, during the same period, area campaigns were carried out for cabbage in the Southeast, turkey in the East, Midwest and West, and sweetpotatoes in the Southwest.

In connection with this latter campaign, a letter has been received from a county Chamber of Commerce in Texas stating that the sweetpotato program was so successful there that a survey revealed that less than 15 carloads of the 1949 crop were left to be moved and future delivery orders would clear them up within the next few days. "The results were astounding and appreciated by this organization and the sweetpotato growers of County," the letter concluded.

Currently, a "four star" program has been underway for dried beans. The national campaign covered the merchandising week April 27 to May 3, while a particularly intensive area program in the Midwest was carried on in the period April 27 to May 10.

Cooperative Efforts Bring Results

The results accomplished by the "Plentiful Foods Program," cited in this article, may seem to be a bit spectacular. However, they are taken from reports made directly to the Food Distribution Programs Branch. Results of other campaigns may or may not be so encouraging. The important thing, is that with the growing support of the food trade and other public-minded groups, this program has demonstrated that "plentiful foods" can be moved through normal trade channels in much larger volume to the mutual benefit of producers, handlers and consumers.

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REVISED BULLETIN EXPLAINS PRICE PROGRAMS

"Price Programs of the United States Department of Agriculture," Agriculture Information Bulletin No. 13, brings up to date the simplified explanation of price-support operations outlined first in "Price Programs of the United States Department of Agriculture--1949." In addition to surveying price programs under new farm legislation enacted in 1949, the revision outlines, in question and answer form, the International Wheat Agreement, Section 32, the National School Lunch, Marketing agreement and order, sugar, and supply programs. A discussion of parity and how it is computed is also included in the publication. Copies may be obtained from the Information Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

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UNIVERSAL STANDARDS COTTON CONFERENCE HELD

The Production and Marketing Administration has announced that a total of 1,055 key boxes of the 1946 universal cotton standards were examined and approved by delegates attending the 9th Universal Standards Cotton Conference for 1950, held in Washington in May. Key boxes are samples of cotton used as guides to standards serving as a basis for international trade in cotton. The conference, first since 1946, was attended by delegates from 10 European and Asiatic trade organizations and over 30 American organizations. The next meeting is scheduled for an unspecified date in 1953.

We Like To Sell Peaches

By Wesley Windisch

My wife and I have produced and marketed peaches for 20 years. Financially, some of those years have been good, some bad, and some indifferent. But we intend to stay in the peach business. We like it. We look forward to each new season, knowing that it will at least be interesting, and--to judge from the past--it will occasionally be exciting.

Our orchard is located about a half mile off the main highway, between Toledo and Sandusky, Ohio. Over the years, the size of our production unit has varied from 10 to 25 acres. As the peach industry goes, that is a relatively small operation. But we sell direct to consumers, through our own roadside market, and we have tailored our production volume to fit our marketing outlet. Looking back, we still believe that our decision to "stay small" was a wise one--at least for us.

Consumer Reaction Felt First-hand

The roadside market brings out sharply the close relationship between production and marketing. You meet your customers and find out what they want. Then you try to gear your production operations to your market. The same relationship exists in more complex types of marketing. But when marketing becomes complex, producers and consumers cannot talk over, in neighborly fashion, such factors as quality, variety, and price.

With peaches, as with any other agricultural commodity, one fact stands out: You can't sell a poor-quality product and make any money at it. You must aim at a product that will, in effect, sell itself.

When it comes to peaches, proper size and just the right degree of ripeness are extremely important considerations. At our farm, the harvesting is done as much as possible by skilled workers who have been with us for many years. These people know how to handle peaches. They know when peaches are ripe and how to harvest them in such a way as to preserve their on-the-tree quality.

Last year we had a heavy crop in prospect. Then a drought set in and it looked for a while as though we were in for some real trouble. On top of everything else, I had to be away from the farm during this most critical period. Had it not been for my conscientious helpers in the orchard, together with my hard-working sales force, 1949 would have been a disastrous season. As it turned out, we were able to show a small profit after all the odds that were against us. So I say that tried and tested workers pay dividends.

Variety is important, too. In the past 20 years, many new varieties, including the South Haven and Hale Haven have proved to be good additions to such old timers as Early Elberta, Elberta, J. H. Hale, and Rochester. But along with the new varieties came the need for safer pruning to keep the trees from breaking and to get more large fruit with less hand thinning--although we have found that hand thinning is money well spent.

The fact that the Elberta is somewhat tender in bud caused us to change to some of the earlier and more hardy varieties. Freezing temperatures are a peach grower's greatest fear. A peach grower doesn't have time to be a clock watcher--but he is quite a thermometer watcher. Lake Erie is a big help in keeping spring frosts away from our orchard. Several times the difference between a good crop and a complete failure has depended wholly upon the protection from the lake and the wooded areas around the orchard. The water warms the air slightly and the woods funnel air currents over and around the orchard.

Our orchard is clean cultivated. We plant rye in the spring, which is plowed under as green manure. And we use commercial fertilizer. That treatment seems to keep the trees in good shape.

You Can't Slight Any Step

A roadside marketer must, sooner or later, see to it that as much time as necessary is devoted to both production and marketing. Both are equally important. I decided early in the game that my place was in the orchard. That automatically made Mrs. Windisch sales manager--and a good sales manager at that. She likes to sell. She knows the varieties and the best uses to which each variety can be put. Her practical suggestions along the use line are a big factor in keeping many customers coming back to the market. Then, too, she contributes the invaluable "woman's touch" to the displays and to the over-all appearance of the market.

Market layout is something that should be given quite a bit of thought. The buildings ought to be attractive--that entices motorists to stop--and they ought to be sized according to your volume. Customers rattle around in a building that's too big. A big place, furthermore, has a vaguely depressing effect. Buildings that are too small, on the other hand, are a nuisance all the way 'round. Customers and sales people are forever in each others' way and that's bound to be irritating.

Put plenty of emphasis on a big parking lot. And make the parking lot easy of access from the highway. With a big lot you can take care of a great many customers, which is one of your aims. Easy access to the lot reduces the danger of traffic accidents.

Locate the market on a busy road, of course. We had fair success when we operated on a cross road, about a half mile from the main highway. But we decided to move to the main highway, which carries thousands of cars a day, 7 days a week. Very few old customers failed to locate us at our new place of business and sales picked up sharply as new buyers "discovered" us.

You must advertise. We have a modern electric sign at the market. And signs along the highway, in both directions, tell motorists that tree-ripened fruit is just ahead. The fruit itself can be a good advertisement if displayed properly. A sign will call attention to the market, but an attractive display will really pull the customers in.

Prices Geared Both to Quality and Wholesale Base

How about prices? The general level of peach prices, as with other commodities, is fixed by the laws of supply and demand. In appraising supply and demand--and quality and size--we base our price at the farm on the wholesale markets at Cleveland and Toledo. That way our prices are a little lower than prevail in local retail markets. Actually, the customer is entitled to a little lower price when he buys at a roadside market, because he is assuming one of the marketing charges that are normally assessed against a farm commodity--transportation. In the grading and sizing of peaches, we do accumulate some off-grade fruit. This fruit is priced somewhat below our high-quality peaches and sells readily. The two-price system has enabled us to move all our production, both high and low quality, at what we consider fair prices.

Nothing New in the Rules

In summary, anybody who plans to operate a roadside market and make it pay, should follow these rules:

1. Produce a high quality product and price it fairly.
2. Follow common-sense merchandising techniques--and if you aren't sure what they are, observe operations of successful markets.
3. Treat your customers as you like to be treated.

These rules, incidentally, aren't new. They are as old as agriculture itself.

* * *

COMMERCIAL HOLDINGS OF FARMERS' STOCK PEANUTS DOWN

The total supply of peanuts (farmers' stock equivalent basis) held in commercial positions declined 115 million pounds during April, and at the end of the month totaled 438 million pounds, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics reported in mid-May. This compares with holdings of 648 million pounds in sight a year ago and is the smallest end-of-April supply since the 1939-40 season. These supply figures exclude stocks remaining on farms and holdings of shelled oil stock peanuts. Stocks of both cleaned goods and shelled edible peanuts were above holdings a year ago, with a sharply decreased supply of farmers' stock contributing entirely to the short supply situation. A total of 67 million pounds of farmers' stock peanuts were cleaned and shelled during April, compared with 146 million pounds cleaned and shelled a year earlier and 120 million pounds during March 1950. This excludes shelling operations which could be identified as for seed purposes. Only 4 million pounds of farmers' stock were reported crushed during April.

Some Tricks In Cotton Handling

By Jo Brice Wilmeth

Many of the improved methods of cotton handling being adopted today are results of unique and promising cooperation between farsighted cotton warehousemen and researchers of the U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Several years ago spokesmen for the cotton warehousemen first outlined to the Department a forthright program which is now well on the way toward making labor more productive in cotton warehouse handling operations and thus reducing handling costs.

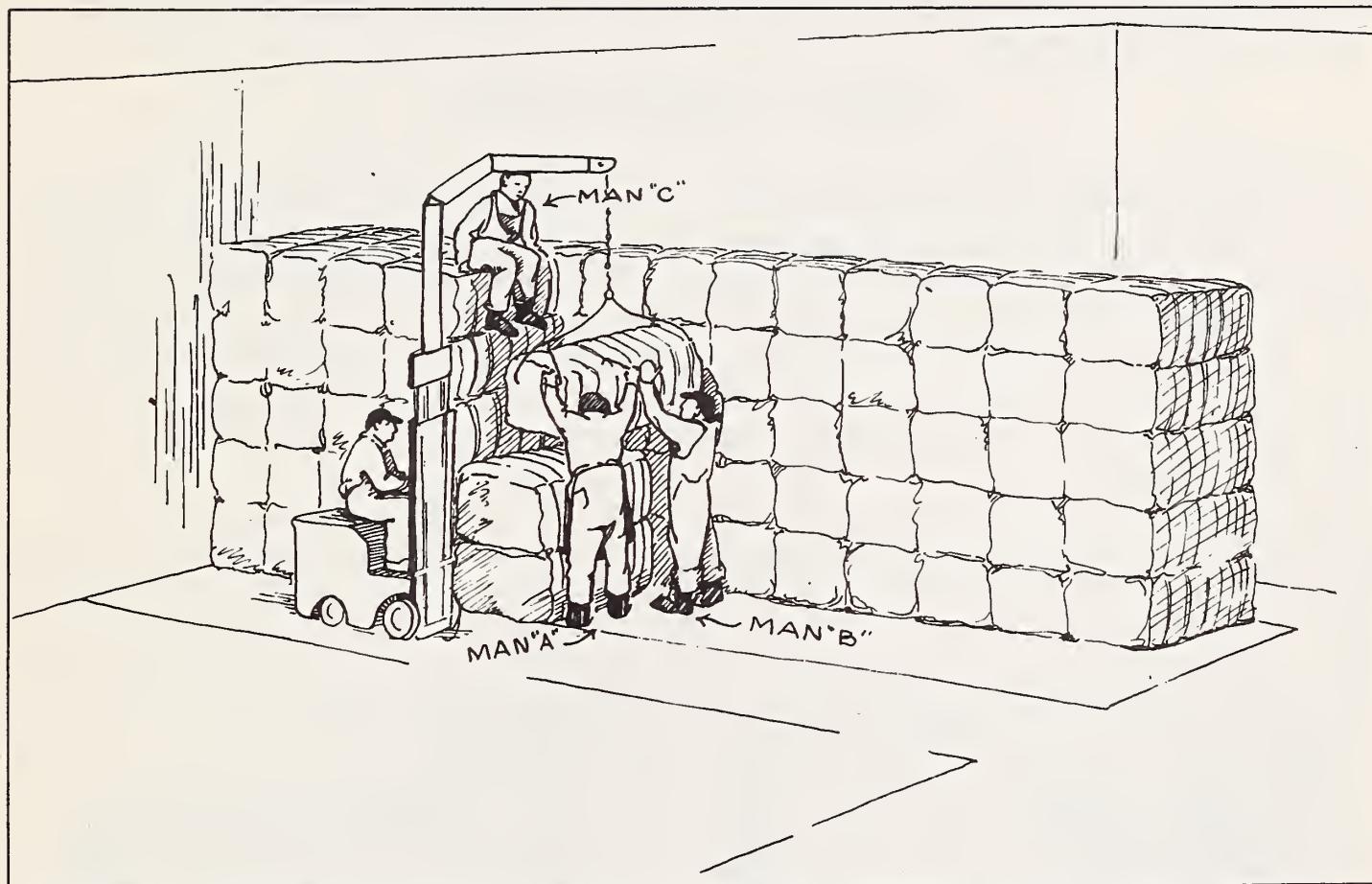
This research has been under way during the past year in the Marketing and Facilities Research Branch of the Production and Marketing Administration. The project was authorized and is being financed under authority of the Research and Marketing Act of 1946. The cotton warehouse industry has been represented by the National Cotton Compress and Cotton Warehouse Association and the National Cotton Council of America.

Two Reports Issued

From the first there has been but one major deviation from the original plan for the research program. Instead of waiting for an overall "package summary" on all phases of cotton handling to be studied, the industry has requested that USDA recommendations be submitted job-by-job as old handling techniques are improved or new or better methods developed. So far, two reports have been issued, each covering information on a single type of handling operation. Charles D. Bolt and Alan W. Steinberg, USDA industrial engineers who made the field studies and prepared the reports, presented their findings to the National Cotton Compress and Cotton Warehouse Association during its annual meeting held in New Orleans in May.

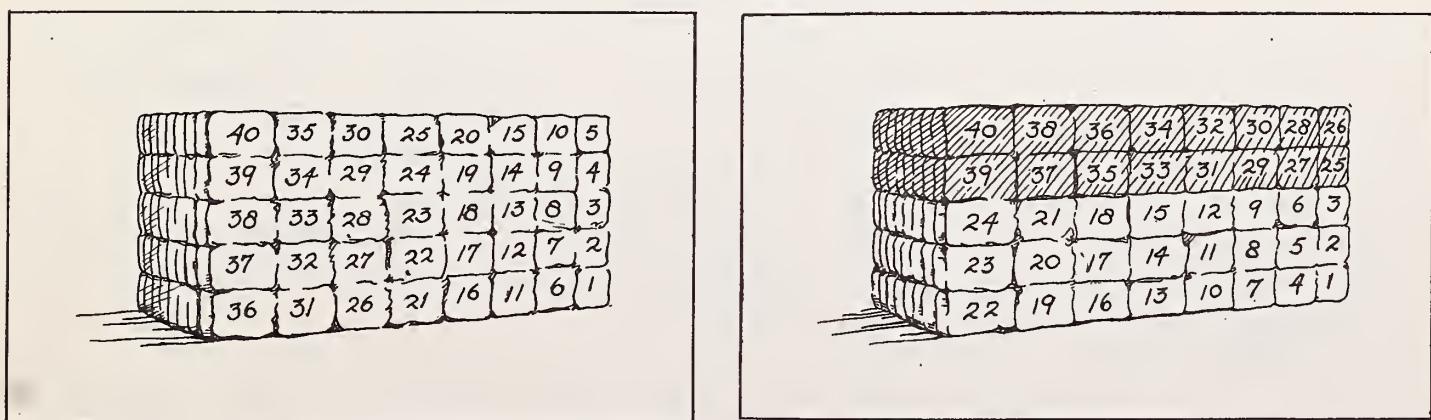
The first improvement developed involves the basic problem of bale stacking for most efficient handling. If space were available all cotton bales, particularly uncompressed bales, would be "stood on end" for ease in storing and breaking out of storage. However, much cotton, particularly standard density bales, must be stacked, in "cordwood" or some other fashion in order to conserve space. Any method which increases the efficiency of the stacking operation is therefore a direct contribution toward cutting down handling costs. The new method of stacking bales "cordwood" fashion requires only three men instead of the four or more customarily employed, and the job is done as fast or faster with no more work required of the streamlined crew.

In warehouses using the "cordwood" system of stacking, compressed bales are commonly stacked in rows up to 200 feet long and 4, 5 and 6 bales high. Usually, the first bales are placed one on top of the other, to the full height of the stack, the same with the next bales, and so on until the row is completed. This method of performing the stacking operation usually requires a crew of 4 men or more, including an operator



Crew arrangement for positioning first three layers using the old method of stacking.

for the "boom stacker" (a mechanical hoist), and two men on the floor to place lift hooks on the bales and to guide the first 3 bales into place. One man stays on top of the stack throughout the stacking operation in order to guide the bales into the 4th, 5th and 6th. layers.



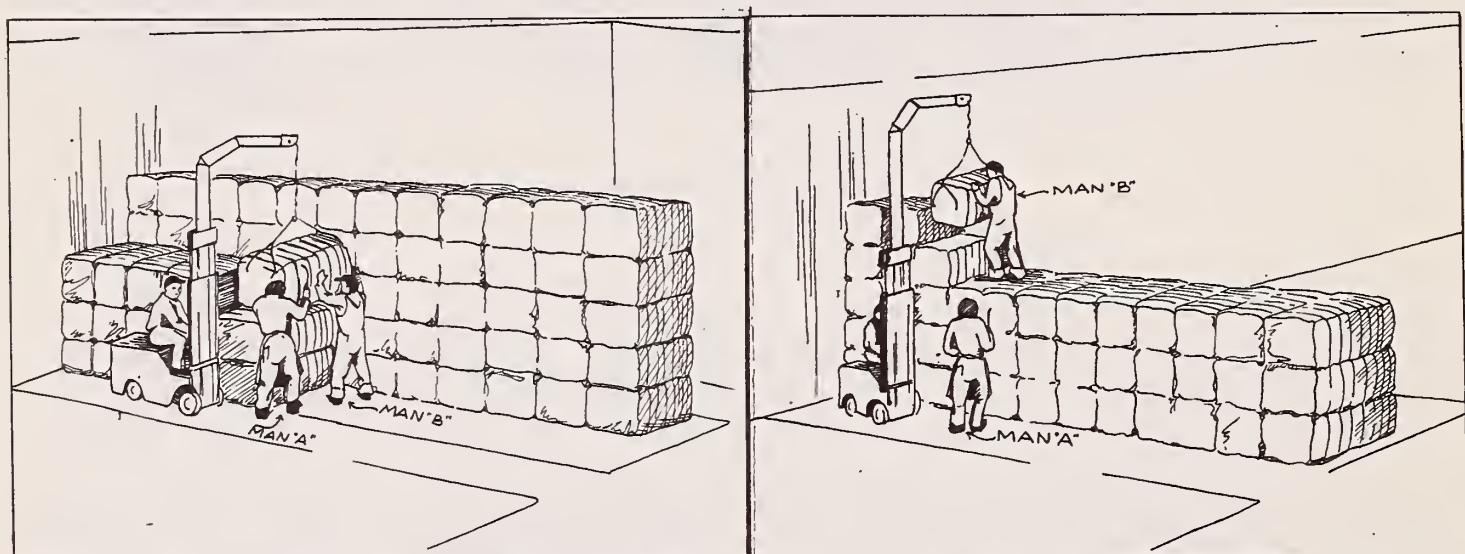
The old order of stacking (left) is contrasted with the improved order (right).

The stacking method devised by the Department uses only a 3-man crew with the boom stacker. One man operates the stacker, and the other

2 men handle bales from the floor, stacking at first only 3 bales high. Then the 4th and 5th layers of bales are placed on the first three layers with one of the men from the floor now stationed on top of the stack to handle the bales as they are lifted by the stacker. If a relatively long stack (say, 100 to 200 feet) is to be built, it usually is better first to construct a complete segment about a third or half of the eventual length of the row. The row is completed by constructing one or two more segments, each time laying first a row 3 bales high and then adding the 4th and 5th bales.

New Method Learned Quickly

Time-study comparison of the old and the new stacking methods show that where worker efforts are equal; a slightly higher stacking rate can be obtained by the improved method. Based on actual production results the new method has proved capable of maintaining or exceeding any production rate obtained by the old method--and assuming uniform wage rates, at a saving of at least 25 percent in labor costs. Moreover, experience has shown that a crew is able to learn the new routine quickly, attaining in the first day of use, a rate equal to that previously attained by the old method.



Crew arrangements for the first and second step of the improved method of stacking.

Test studies have shown that if a handling operation is to be performed most efficiently, the movements of the various crew members must be synchronized--much as the assignments of football players must be worked out precisely in the execution of a perfect play. For example, it has been found that if each hand trucker enroute to the stacking machine with a bale waits near the end of the three-high stack for the preceding "no-cargo" trucker to pass him on the way back before proceeding down the feeder aisle to the stacker, congestion and delay in the feeder aisle will be avoided. Nor does this slow the work of the stacker, since the stacking machine is not ready at this point to receive the next bale, being occupied with hoisting and positioning its previous load. Moreover, during this time, the workman with the empty truck has the freeway to load again at the supply source.

Other refinements in this stacking method include suggestions that at times simple scissors-type hooks be substituted for the more unwieldy chain and claw hooks originally designed for placement by two men.

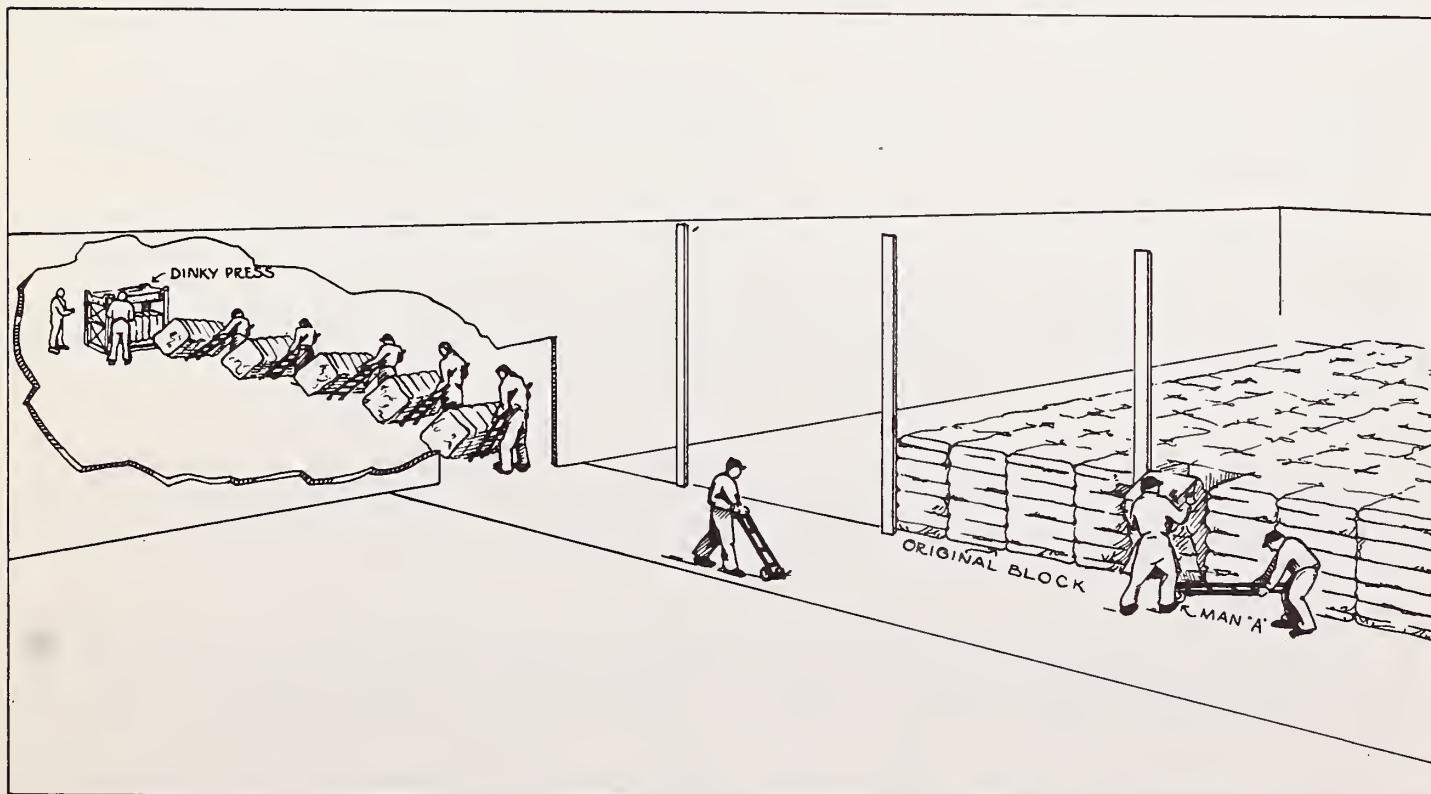
Second Study Compares Handling Aids

The second study for which conclusions have been reported to the industry compares the use of two-wheel hand trucks and clamp-type industrial trucks in transporting bales to the dinky press during a compressing operation. The dinky press is a small low-pressure press used directly before the compression operation for relieving pressure on the bale ties and making possible their removal. Important recommendations in this study call for a reshuffling of personnel performing the operations as well as some strategic handling of the bales themselves.

The work outlined in this particular study applies to compressing operations in which cotton warehouses concentrate, or group bales, prior to actual compression, in a section of the press compartment usually referred to as a blocked area. The group of bales so concentrated make up what is called a "block." From here bales are fed directly to the dinky press at a rate keyed to the capacity of the main press.

"Temporary Block" Absorbs Surges

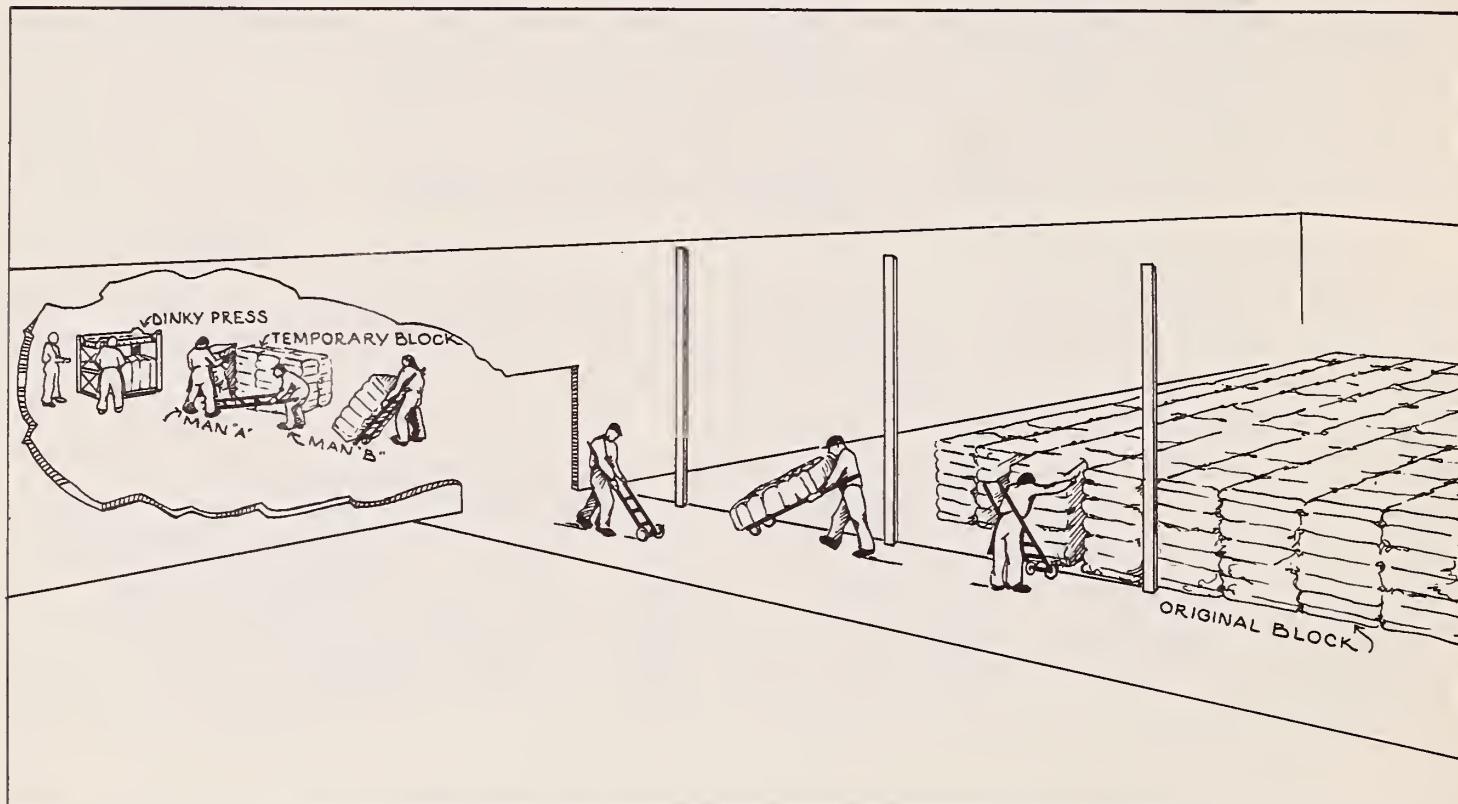
Whether hand trucks or industrial trucks are used in hauling bales from the original block, a principal factor making possible the saving of labor costs under the improved methods has been the introduction of a "temporary block" between the original block and the dinky press. The temporary block is located from 10 to 15 feet from the dinky press or at some point close enough to allow all transporting of bales from the temporary block to the dinky press to be performed by one hand-trucker. The purpose of the temporary block is to absorb surges in the rate at which bales are received from the original block, and simultaneously to provide an immediately available supply of bales for the dinky press, as surges take place in the pressing rate of the main press.



Typical 8-man crew arrangement under the present method of feeding the dinky press.

Normally, where two-wheel hand trucks are used, and assuming a transport distance of around 200 feet and a pressing rate of approximately 100 bales per hour, about 8 men are required to feed the dinky press directly from the original block of bales. Of this 8-man crew, 7 are hand truckers while one "pull-down" man helps load the hand trucks in a particular manner so that the bale may be moved directly into the press. In such operations 3 or more of the 7 truckers may frequently be waiting in line at the press.

In contrast, under the improved method involving the temporary block, but using hand trucks as before, the crew required for feeding the dinky press consists of 6 men: 4 hand truckers and 2 men stationed at the temporary block, or 2 men less than for the usual procedure.



Where a temporary block has been introduced, 6 men handily feed the dinky press.

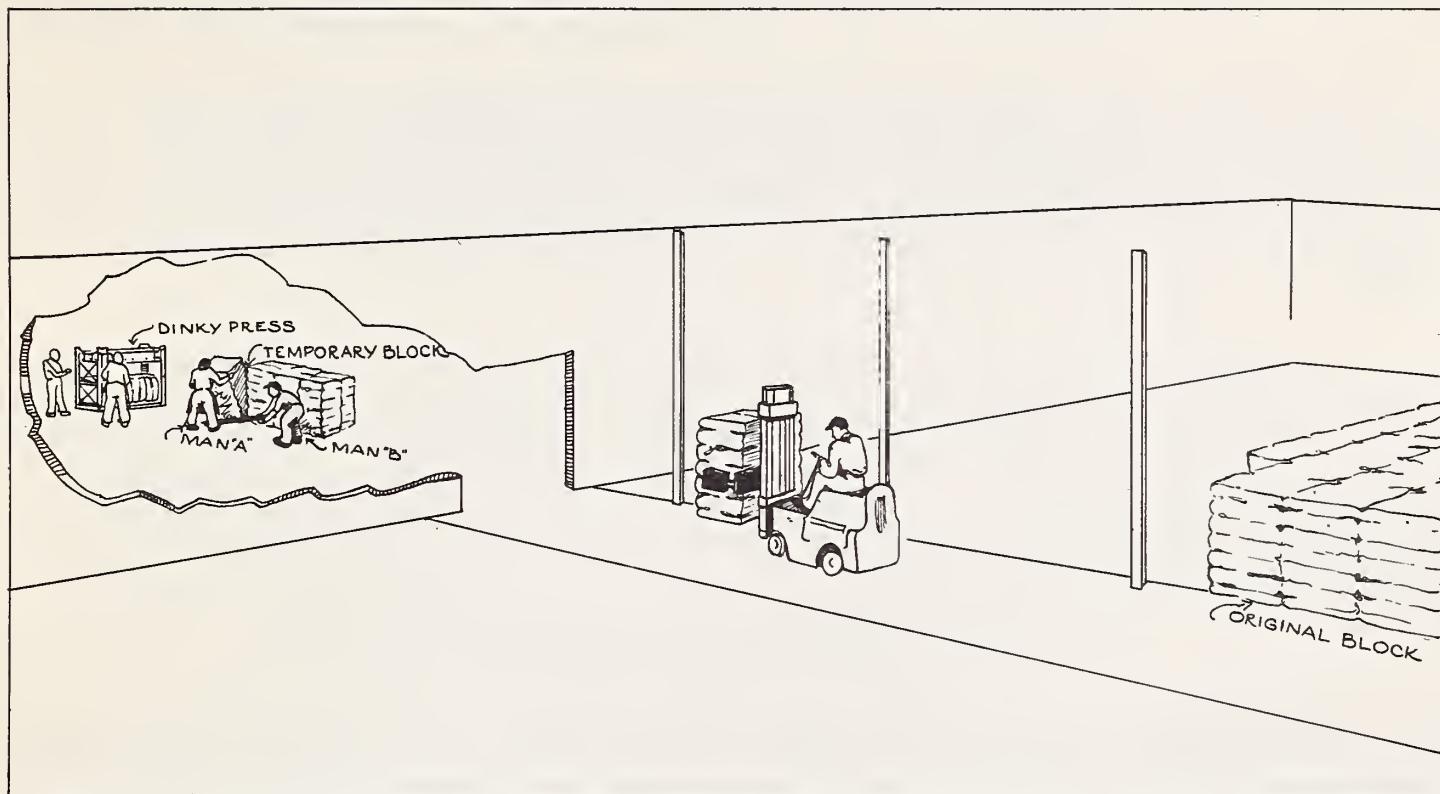
The improved system provides that each hand trucker picks up a bale from the original block and wheels it to the temporary block. No "pull-down" man is needed in this movement since the bale need not be positioned precisely on the hand truck inasmuch as it is not fed directly to the press.

On arriving at the temporary block, the hand trucker unloads his bale without delay, turns, leaves the press, and returns to the original block to repeat the cycle.

At the temporary block the "pull-down" man positions the bale properly on a hand truck used only for moving bales to the press, and also helps the "short-haul" hand trucker in his feeding operation.

Where a clamp-type industrial truck is employed, operations between the temporary block and the dinky press are not altered, although total

crew requirements are cut down because one man operating the clamp truck can successfully maintain the temporary block, thus replacing the 4 hand truckers used in the operation described above. No manual assistance is needed with the clamp truck in either picking up the bales or depositing them at the temporary block.



With a two-bale capacity clamp-type industrial truck, a 3-man crew is adequate to feed the dinky press.

Time studies of present operations indicate that from 35 to 50 percent of the total man-hours involved in feeding the dinky press are non-productive. Most of these hours are spent by hand truckers waiting at the dinky press. With application of either the improved hand-truck system or the industrial truck this non-productivity is eliminated. Where industrial trucks are employed the very impressive savings in labor costs must of course be somewhat reduced by increased charges for operation and maintenance of the equipment. Studies on similar cotton handling problems are underway, and will be issued when further improvements are developed.

Reports describing in more detail the handling operations outlined above are available upon request to the Production and Marketing Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

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SUNLIGHT AFFECTS VITAMIN C CONTENT IN TOMATOES

Sunlight is more important in determining the vitamin C content of tomatoes than the variety, growing conditions, color of the fruit, or any other factor, according to food chemists at the New York Experiment Stations at Geneva and Ithaca. Vitamin C is most closely related to climatic conditions, especially sunlight, point out the researchers, who have found that the vitamin C content of tomatoes during a sunny season may be double that found in the same variety during a cloudy season.

Wool Clip Tallied By Grade

For the first time, producers, textile manufacturers, and others can learn the breakdown of a year's wool clip by grade. This information on both pulled and shorn wool comes as a by-product of the wool price support program carried out by the Production and Marketing Administration.

In 1946, the year for which these distribution figures are available, virtually all of the domestic wool offered for sale was acquired under the wartime price support program. The resulting percentages of wool produced by grades, therefore, represent an accurate breakdown of the year's clip. Little, if any, of this wool, or wool acquired in other years, now remains on hand.

'46 Grade Breakdown Believed Representative Of Current Wool Production

Grade plays an important part in selecting wool for the innumerable cloth and textile uses. Most of the domestic consumption is used in the manufacture of clothing and blankets, and the 1946 breakdown places most wool in grades that are used for these purposes. Most of the Common and Braid wool used in the manufacture of rugs and carpets is imported. Since the changes in sheep numbers after 1946 have been at about the same rate in the various areas where different grades of wool are produced, the figures for 1946 production are believed to be representative of current production by grades.

Pulled wool purchases under the 1946 program were also analyzed by grades. Pulled wool is obtained from sheep and lambs slaughtered.

The following table shows, in percent, the amount of each grade of this production of wool:

	Shorn Grease : Percent	Pulled: Clean : Percent	Shorn & Pulled: Clean : Percent	
Fine, 64s and finer	53.0	45.6	9.7	36.8
1/2 blood, 58/60s to 60/64s	16.3	16.6	38.3	21.9
3/8 blood, 58s to 58/58s	16.5	20.6	45.7	26.8
1/4 blood, 48/50s to 50/56s	9.9	12.9	5.3	11.1
Low 1/4 blood, 46s to 48s	1.5	1.4	0.7	1.2
Common and braid, 36s to 44s	0.5	0.7	0.3	0.6
Offsorts (ungraded)	2.3	2.2		1.6
 Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

These 1946 grade distribution figures were compiled by the Livestock Branch of USDA's Production and Marketing Administration in developing the wool price support program for 1950. The figures were based on shorn wool purchases of 288.6 million pounds, grease basis, or 122.4 million pounds, clean basis, and pulled wool purchases of 39.6 million pounds, clean basis.

Grades and shrinkages of the wool purchased in the 1946 program were determined by Government appraisers. These appraisals formed the basis for determining returns to growers, because purchase prices were based on grade and clean yield.

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ADDITIONAL POULTRY PROCESSING REQUIREMENTS ANNOUNCED

Examination of poultry and rabbits during the eviscerating process, by qualified persons, has been announced as a supplemental requirement to the revised USDA grading program for ready-to-cook poultry and domestic rabbits.

The requirements, announced May 10 by PMA, call for condemnation of carcasses in which is detected any condition rendering them unfit for food. These requirements, which become effective as of June 12, provide additional assurance that ready-to-cook poultry or rabbits, bearing official USDA grade labels are wholesome products.

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PORK PRODUCTION UP; BEEF DOWN FOR FIRST QUARTER 1950

Pork and mutton and lamb production increased 6 and 2 percent respectively, during the period January-April 1950, as compared to the comparable period a year ago. However, 1950 beef and veal production were down 2 and 3 percent for the same period. Total meat production for this quarter, 1950, was up 1 percent over that of 1949. These figures were announced May 31 by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics.

Commercial meat production in the United States during April 1950 totaled 1,512 million pounds, a decrease of 12 percent from the 1,712 million pounds produced during March, but 2 percent more than the 1,482 million pounds produced during April 1949. These figures are based on slaughter in federally inspected plants and in other wholesale and retail plants, but excludes farm slaughter.

April slaughter of 5,221,000 hogs showed a decrease of 14 percent compared with March, but an increase of 10 percent compared with April 1949. Slaughter of calves in April 1950, was 833,600, a decrease of 10 percent from April a year ago. The number of cattle slaughtered during April totaled 1,322,600 head, 11 percent less than in the preceding month and 3 percent less than in April a year earlier.

Marketing Briefs

Cotton.--The Production and Marketing Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture announced June 1 that Commodity Credit Corporation sold 41,962 bales of 1948-crop pooled cotton pursuant to its offer to sell, dated May 12, 1950. Bids were opened on May 22, 1950. The 1948-crop cotton was pooled for the account of producers on August 1, 1949. To date, 256,148 bales of 1948-crop pooled cotton have been sold.

Dairy.--Three changes in the form of an amendment to the Federal order regulating the handling of milk in the Fort Wayne, Ind., milk marketing area were announced May 25 by the Production and Marketing Administration of the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The changes (1) reduce the size of the Fort Wayne milk marketing area to the city limits, (2) reclassify aerated products from Class II milk to Class III milk, and (3) revise the definition of "producer" to include only those dairy farmers who produce milk inspected and approved by the Ft. Wayne Board of Health. The announced changes were based on evidence received at a public hearing January 31 and February 1 and upon exceptions of producers and handlers in the market regarding the Department's recommendations announced March 21. The amendment was issued following approval by more than two-thirds of the dairy farmers who participated in a referendum.

Fruits and Vegetables.--Adoption of several amendments to the marketing agreement and order regulating the handling of peaches grown in Mesa County, Colorado has been recommended by the Production and Marketing Administration. The amendments were proposed by the Administrative Committee, the agency established under the marketing program, and the Department's recommendation is based on evidence presented at a public hearing held at Palisade, Colorado, on March 8 and 9, 1950. The principal amendments recommended would (1) permit the regulation of peach shipments by minimum standards of quality and maturity, and (2) make several changes designed to define more clearly the scope of operation of the program... On May 31 announcement was made by PMA that, in accordance with recommendations of the Southeastern Potato Committee, potato shipments for the 1950 season from Virginia-North Carolina will be limited to 85 percent U. S. 1 or better grades. The regulation became effective as of June 5, and will continue in effect until August 15, 1950. During period of regulation all shipments of Virginia-North Carolina potatoes covered by the Southeastern States marketing agreement and order must be inspected by the Federal-State Inspection Service prior to shipment.... Extensions of the periods for making sales, exporting, and filing of claim under the Dried Fruit Export program to June 30, September 30, and October 31, 1950, respectively, were announced May 24 by PMA. Program termination dates, as originally established, were May 31, June 30, and July 31, 1950, respectively.

Grains.--The Production and Marketing Administration on May 26 reported that farmers had put 333,541,278 bushels of 1949-crop corn under Commodity Credit Corporation price support through April 1950. This compares with approximately 346,581,191 bushels of 1948-crop corn put under support through April 1949. The price support total for 1949-crop corn consists of 303,642,137 bushels under farm storage loans, 3,293,053 under warehouse storage loans, and 26,606,088 under purchase agreements. While the loan total through April is larger this year than last (when it amounted to 285,222,535 bushels) the purchase agreement amount is less than half of last year's figure of 61,358,656 bushels. The Production and Marketing Administration on May 25 announced that farmers may reseal their 1948-crop oats, barley, and corn in farm-storage loans for another year. Farmers who resealed their 1948-crop oats and barley to mature April 30, 1950, may now extend their loans to mature on April 30, 1951 in areas where PMA State Committees determine the grain can be safely stored on the farms for another year. Applications for such extension must be made to PMA county committees prior to the final date for delivery specified in the delivery instructions issued by these committees to producers. Corn loans may be similarly extended to mature on July 31, 1951.... Announcement was also made by PMA (also on May 25) of an extension of time in which farmers may apply for re-sealing loans on farm-stored 1949-crop wheat, corn, oats, barley, grain sorghums, rye, and flaxseed. Farmers may extend their 1949-crop loans on these commodities, or convert 1949-crop purchase agreements into loans for the extended period. This announcement provides that re-sealing applications "be made to county PMA committees before the final date for delivery specified in delivery instructions issued by these committees." Final delivery dates vary throughout the country, but in most cases will fall within the 60-day period from May 1 to June 30, for 1949-crop wheat, rye, flaxseed, grain sorghums, oats, and barley; most of the corn deliveries will take place between August 1 and September 30.

Grain Storage.--The Commodity Credit Corporation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced May 4 that it has completed contract awards made under the announcement of April 4 that it would consider offers on perforated floors and ventilating duct systems for use in grain storage structures recently purchased by the Corporation. Only one award was made under the offer. This was to the Great Lakes Steel Corporation, Detroit, Michigan, for 299 metal ventilating duct systems for 40' by 100' flat metal storage structures. No awards were made for perforated floors. A survey by States, completed after the announcement of the April 4 offer, has revealed that sufficient additional floors are available in some States to meet current requirements in other States.

Livestock.--The Production and Marketing Administration announced May 31 that a hearing on the recent proposal announced by PMA on May 12 to revise Federal beef grades will be held at 10 a.m., C.D.S.T., on June 28, 1950 in room 582, United States Court House, Clark and Dearborn Streets, Chicago, Illinois. At this hearing any interested person who wishes to do so may present views either written or spoken which are relevant to the specific proposal. Views may also be filed with the Director, Livestock Branch, Production and Marketing Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C., on or before July 11, 1950.

Principal changes proposed in the announcement by PMA on May 12 relate to steer, heifer, and cow beef only and (1) combine existing Prime and Choice grades into one grade to be designated as Prime; (2) redesignate the present Good grade as Choice; and (3) divide the present Commercial grade into two grades, one of which will be called Good and will cover beef which comes from high quality cattle that have not reached full maturity while the remaining part of the present Commercial grade will continue to be called Commercial.

Poultry.--PMA announced in mid-May that the purchase of dried eggs will be continued during July and August at levels reflecting to producers a price of at least 25 cents a dozen (27 cents a dozen when delivered by the producer to the plant of the drier). This will be a continuation of the support program that has been in effect since January, and at the same levels. Vendors who sell dried eggs to the Department must certify that they have paid producers these prices for eggs in the surplus-producing areas. Offers of dried eggs will be received for July delivery beginning Tuesday, June 6, and for August delivery beginning Tuesday, July 4.

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SURPLUS STOCKS DISTRIBUTION ANNOUNCED BY PMA

The Production and Marketing Administration reported May 29 that donations of Commodity Credit Corporation surplus foods to eligible recipients in the United States, under Section 416 of the Agricultural Act of 1949 and Public Law 471, totaled more than 120 million pounds through April 30, 1950. Donations to private welfare organizations for foreign relief purposes, through the same date, totaled over 20 million pounds.

Under Section 416 of the Agricultural Act of 1949, to prevent waste through deterioration or spoilage of commodities acquired by CCC in price-support operations, the Corporation makes them available free, at point of storage, to the following, in the priority named: First, school-lunch programs, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Federal, State and local public welfare organizations for assistance of needy Indians and other needy persons; second, to private welfare organizations for assistance of needy persons within the United States; and, third, to private welfare organizations for assistance of needy persons outside the United States. Under Public Law 471, transportation costs may be paid by the Corporation on 1949-crop potatoes under certain conditions.

Distribution is made by CCC on the basis of requests received, and so far it has been possible to fill all requests from eligible agencies. Domestic distribution to first and second priority groups, through April 30, included 4,221,000 pounds of nonfat dried milk solids, 1,714,000 pounds of dried eggs, 109,418,000 pounds of potatoes, 3,426,000 pounds of butter, and 1,828,000 pounds of cheese. Distribution for foreign relief included 18,629,675 pounds of nonfat dried milk solids, and 3,901,304 pounds of dried eggs. Butter and cheese are not available to third priority groups, and no potato shipments have been made.

ABOUT MARKETING

The following addresses, statements, and publications, issued recently, may be obtained upon request. To order, check on this page the publications desired, detach and mail to the Production and Marketing Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington 25, D. C.

Addresses:

Peanuts and the Farm Program, an address by Ralph S. Trigg, Administrator, Production and Marketing Administration and President, Commodity Credit Corporation, at a meeting of the National Peanut Council, White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, April 21, 1950. 10 pp. (Processed)

The Testing for Purity and Germination of Seed Offered for Importation into the United States, an address by Oren L. Justice, Seed Technologist, Seed Act Divn., before the International Seed Testing Assn., Wash., D. C., May 8-12, 1950. 19 pp. (Processed)

Publications:

Consumer Purchases of Selected Fresh Fruits, Canned and Frozen Juices, and Dried Fruits in March 1950. May 1950. 19 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

Deliveries to Export Programs, Invoiced During Fiscal Years 1941-1950, through December 1949. April 1950. 27 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

Problems of Transporting and Marketing Hatching Eggs and Baby Chicks in the Northeastern States. April 1950. 24 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

Cost and Quality of Cotton Ginning in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas, Seasons 1947 and 1948. March 1950. 50 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

Grade and Staple Length of Upland Cotton Ginned in the United States 1949-50. April 1950. 1 p. (PMA) (Processed)

Charges for Ginning Cotton and Related Data, Season 1949-50. April 1950. 2 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

Comparison of Rate of Deterioration of Storage and Nonstorage Eggs, Report of a study made under the Research and Marketing Act of 1946. March 1950. 3 pp. (PMA and Agricultural Research Admin.) (Processed)

Interpretations of the Regulations for the Enforcement of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. Revised March 1950. 52 pp. (PMA) (Printed)

Beet Sugar Factories of the United States. Revised March 1950. 21 pp. (PMA) (Printed)

A Modified Technique for Making Cotton Fiber Maturity Tests. April 1950. 17 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

U. S. Consumer Standards for Husked Corn on the Cob (Effective May 11, 1950). 3 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

United States Standards for Grades of Canned Spinach (Effective May 12, 1950). 9 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

Marketing California Asparagus 1949 Season. March 1950. 27 pp. (PMA and California Department of Agriculture cooperating) (Processed)

Marketing Texas Cabbage, 1949-50 Season. April 1950. 5 pp. (PMA) (Processed)

Marketing California-Arizona Citrus Summary of 1948-49 Season. 53 pp. (PMA and California Dept. of Agriculture cooperating) (Processed)

Marketing Salinas-Watsonville-Hollister Lettuce Summary of 1949 Season. April 1950. 37 pp. (PMA and Calif. Dept. of Agriculture cooperating) (Processed)

Summary of Yuma Lettuce Season, 1949-50. April 1950. 25 pp. (PMA and Arizona Fruit and Vegetable Standardization Service cooperating) (Processed)

Marketing Arizona Salt River Valley Lettuce Summary of 1949 Fall and 1950 Spring Season. April 1950. 21 pp. (PMA and Arizona F&V Standardization Service cooperating) (Processed)

Marketing Imperial Valley Melons 1949. April 1950. 27 pp. (PMA and California Dept. of Agriculture cooperating) (Processed)

Marketing Kern District Early Long White Potatoes Summary of 1949 Season. March 1950. 44 pp. (PMA and Calif. Dept. of Agriculture cooperating) (Processed)

Marketing Northwestern Fresh Prunes, Season 1949. Released April 1950. 14 pp. (PMA and Washington State Dept. of Agriculture cooperating) (Processed)

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Marketing Activities

